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SYRIA  
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THE HOLY LAND,  
BEING  
A COURSE OF LECTURES  
DELIVERED

By GREGORY M. WORTABET, Esq.  
A NATIVE OF SYRIA,

AT THE  
TEMPERANCE HALL, HALIFAX, N. S.

8th, 9th & 10th SEPTEMBER, 1856.

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Revised Edition.

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PHONOGRAPHIC REPORT BY H. OLDRIDGE.

*b. 9*  
PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

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## FIRST LECTURE:

Monday, 8th September, 1856.

Why Syria is interesting.—Baalbek—Tyre—Jerusalem—Petra—Mount Calvary,—Syrian Grapes,—Jericho,—Sodom and Gomorrah,—Inhabitants of Syria,—Bedouins or Ishmaelites,—State of the Jews,—Secret of England's greatness.

(Long before the time appointed for the Lecture, the Hall which is capable of containing 1500 or 1600 persons, was densely crowded with a highly respectable audience. The Lecturer, a young man of average height, with pleasing features, dark flashing eyes, and black moustache, appeared in his native costume. He wore a loose skirt or petticoat of light drab cloth, drawn in round the ankles, and fastened round the waist with a broad girdle or sash, a short jacket of the same material with the sleeves cut open half way to the elbow and trimmed with braid, and a light blue flowered silk vest and neckerchief.

It is impossible to describe the exceedingly animated manner in which the Address was delivered, the Lecturer's utterance being very rapid, and the ideas enunciated being forcibly and graphically expressed by appropriate gestures. As these gesticulations, of course, cannot be transcribed, the Lecture loses much of its original force and beauty in any *written* report, however faithful and accurate.)

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN—

Before I say one word I have a favor to ask of you, which is that you will reserve all applause until the close of the Lecture. I can tell by your bright eyes and smiling faces when you are pleased, and at the end we will have a good round. (*Laughter and applause.*)

The subject of this evening's Lecture is one of deep interest to every one who calls himself a Christian. Look at the Crusaders. Were they pious men? No, some were murderers, and some were thieves, yet mark the emotion which they felt on beholding Jerusalem, the tear which rolled down their furrowed cheeks. I love to see a tear on a *man's* face. On the face of *woman* the tear of sympathy is lovely and interesting, but much more so on the face of *man*, as it shows a greater *depth* of feeling. That tear called forth by the mere sight of Jerusalem spoke ten-fold more for the Crusaders in my opinion, than their greatest conquests. Now, *what* is there in Syria to bring all this great audience together? There is no very great difference between Syria as a country, and Nova Scotia. There are rivers there just like those here, hills, trees, and so forth. The inhabitants are not very different from yourselves. I am a native of Syria, and I have hands, feet, eyes, &c. very much like your own. But you love to hear of Syria because it is the scene of Christianity, the land of the Bible, to which Israel came with Joshua at their head. Christ was born there—Christianity was born there,—that Christianity which Infidels say is an effete thing, not fit for this go-ahead age.—There you will see the manger, there you will see the inn in which Christ was born. These form an argument for Christianity which the Infidel with all his power cannot gainsay. The Inns in Syria are in the form of a quadrangle, and are several stories in height. You enter by an archway, and a circular staircase inside conducts you through the building to its summit. The lower tier of rooms is used for stables, and the upper tiers for rooms for the guests. During fairs I have seen those stables used as rooms for poor people. Mary was put into one of those stables, and there in one of them in a manger was Christ born. Why was Christ born in a manger? Oh, depths of love! Oh, delicacy of love! Christ is love, and love is Christ! Heaven is love, and love is Heaven! Christ was born in a manger, that the poorest might have no excuse for not coming to him. None of you were born in a manger, but your Friend, your Saviour, the Redeemer of all was born there. I will speak to you as to men who are bound to die, and after death have to account at the great tribunal. If there be a heaven and a hell, it is time that we knew something about them. If you really believed that there was a hell, you would not be so apathetic about it. I say, my friends, you have no idea of a future world, or you would not be so indifferent about it. That thing Christianity born in a stable, is it going to grow? Mr. Infidel says it cannot, it is

contrary to common sense. Will this poor baby become the crown of the world? No, nonsense. Then the reputed father of this baby followed the business of a *carpenter*, which is considered the *lowest* trade in Syria. Is this *carpenter's* son going to perform a work which will affect the whole universe? His disciples were of the lowest caste in Syria, fishermen and tax gatherers. Then again, look at the creed which He propounded.

Was it like Islamism or Mormonism, that it allowed the pleasures of the flesh? No! Christianity is a religion of self-denial. The human heart being evil, is opposed to it altogether. It was betrayed, denied, forsaken, crucified, put under ground—how can it grow? It is impossible that it should grow. But here is the most wonderful thing, *it has grown!* See it now in the palace of Royalty. Listen to the noble reply of the Queen of England, to a Liberian President, who enquired of her what was the secret of England's grandeur? Her reply was to send him a Bible;—*that* was the secret of England's grandeur! If Herod and the Roman soldiers could jump over to our age and see this, what would they say? Christianity has spread north, south, east, and west, and now fills the whole universe. Let the Infidel think of *this* fact only, and let him show me anything equal to it, that this Christianity sprung from flame, from crucifixion—has risen up and filled the whole universe. Christian heart! take courage. The interest which brings you here to-night is no mere fiction.—Every Bible reader has in his heart the foundation of Christianity. Doubtless, you have all seen a fireplace filled with a large heap of coals, with a very little fire underneath it. The fire was there, but it required to be *poked up*. So with your Christianity. It is smothered up with the rubbish of this world, but it is there, and only requires to be *poked up*. Syria was the home of the Founder of Christianity. He died on the trees of Syria, and it was the remembrance of this which brought the tear down the hardened cheek of the Crusaders. Everything which makes Christianity *sure* must be of value. Suppose I were to tell you of some plan by which you could win £10,000, you would listen to me until to-morrow morning. If you do not show equal interest in hearing of Christianity, it shews that your Christianity is very poor,—that it requires to be *poked up*. Syria should be loved by you as a memorial of the great Redemption. You call me a native of Syria. You are natives of Syria as well as I am; for there is a patriotism in Christianity. Think of the Plains of Jericho—of Bethlehem—of Jerusalem—of Bethany. Can you think of them, without thinking of the Great Redeemer,

who so often trod their streets? Can you think of the waters of Galilee, without thinking of His words, who said, "Be of good cheer, it is I; be not afraid!" Can you think of Cana of Galilee, without thinking of His first miracle there? Have any of you lost a relative? By the sable dresses I observe among you, I presume many of you have.

I go into your room and ask you to give me a Bible I see there. You say, "no, I cannot give you *that* Bible, it is my dead son's Bible!" You will not part with it, because it is a memorial of love. So with Syria. It is a memorial of Him who was born there, who worked miracles there, who died there. Now we come to the claims of Syria upon the Christian mind. In Syria you can never be an Infidel. She shows you in every mountain, and in every river the fulfilment of God's own word. When the prophecies came upon the land, Syria was a great, rich, and powerful country. Tyre was then a great city. So was Jerusalem. Solomon then reigned there in all his glory. The prophecies foretold the destruction of the country. Who believed them? This is the age of Railways and Telegraphs. If our fathers were raised up and put on a Railway Station and heard the steam car whizzing by, they would suppose themselves in another world—they would not believe that they were on this earth. Suppose you take them to the telegraph station, and you ask them if they would like to send a message to a friend in New Orleans. They say, yes, and you send the message on. You ask them how soon they expect to have an answer. They say, oh, in about three months. You tell them the answer is here already—they will not believe you. Now let us compare this very advanced age with Syria. Go and view the mighty ruins of Baalbek, which lies between Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon. That town was built by Solomon, and is so wonderful that your architects are struck dumb with astonishment on viewing it. Its buildings are wonderful for their conception. Some of the stones in those buildings are 64 feet long, (one in particular, 69 feet,) 16 feet high, and 17 feet wide. They were all cut out of a quarry half a mile distant, and all polished before they were put into the buildings. They are fitted so closely to one another that you cannot find the seam between them. It seems as if the city could not have been the work of man. Gaze for a while on its columns 90 feet in height, with the entablature surmounting them. What do you think of it? You cannot think any longer. A person asked me what I thought of that mighty cataract Niagara. I told him that when I saw it I did not think at all, I could do nothing but just gaze! So it is with

the beholder of these magnificent ruins. And, *why*, is it that Syria's Architecture is unequalled. It was said by a mouth that cannot lie, that there never had been and never should be any one like unto Solomon. The great Queen of Sheba said that the half of Solomon's wisdom and prosperity had not been told her, and this Anglo-Saxon age is not equal to Solomon's, although it is 3000 years in advance of it. Syria's Architecture is unrivalled yet—Solomon is unequalled yet—and God's truth remains true.

But Syria was not only great in Architecture, but also in the Arts and Sciences. The Sidonians were celebrated for painting on glass, an art which had been lost to the world. The Tyrians also were distinguished for the beautiful dye called Tyrian purple which has been hitherto inimitable. Syria was also distinguished for her knowledge of Astronomy and Navigation. This country was known to them. The wise men of the present *know* a great deal, and *assume* a great deal more. I can prove to you from the Bible that this country was known in Solomon's time, and that its inhabitants were of the same race as our Bedouins or Ishmaelites. You talk of the wealth of the present age. Do you know what Baalbek cost? There is not a king, or a dozen of kings on the earth at present who could build it. A whole quarry (and in some instances three or four) was exhausted for every stone there. The persons who were quarrying the stones would go to a neighbouring hill, cut it down some 30 or 40 feet until they came to a rock. They would probably find it cracked, and therefore unfit for their purpose. They would then go to another hill, and another, and perhaps after cutting down some four or five hills, they would find a rock which was sound. Then they had to cut, shape, form, and at last, carry the rock. Now, what do you suppose would be the cost of one stone? What the cost of the whole building? What the cost of the entablature? If this city built by Solomon, on the *confines* of the Holy Land in honor of an Egyptian queen cost so much, what do you suppose must have been the cost of the Temple at Jerusalem—of Solomon's own house—of the whole of Jerusalem?—Think also of the other cities which Solomon built—of Baal-Hamon, Baal-Hanan, &c. Think of Solomon's private expenditure, for he had a thousand wives. Think of all this, and you may have *some* idea of the riches of Solomon.

We will now leave Baalbek and come to Tyre, that merchant city. What is Tyre now? What said the *Word* of her? Tyre shall no longer be, she shall be like the top of a rock. I spent

a night in Tyre, a twelvemonth ago last March. The old town is entirely lost, no one can tell exactly where the olden city stood. I rode out of the town at seven in the morning, and saw thirteen nets drying on the rocks as I left. The modern town is situated on a tongue of land which juts out into the sea. The Word said, "It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea." Keith was so struck on viewing Tyre, with the fulfilment of the prophecies regarding her, that it led him to write his great work on that subject. Suppose I told you that in ten years time this whole city would be under water—that where this fine building stands, fishermen would anchor their boats; you would tell me, "what a fool you are." You would probably say, "take that man to the Asylum, and put a waistcoat on him; he is crazy, poor fellow!" But if what I foretold actually took place, you would then say what a *wise* man I was! You speak of the *merchant* princes of London. Where did you get that term? From Syria! You speak of Liverpool as the modern *Tyre*. It is said that Ireland was peopled from Phoenicia, and it is evident that she colonized other countries, for she is called in the Bible the mother of nations. The siege of Tyre is the most wonderful thing in history. It was foretold of Tyre that an army should be brought against her—that a mount should be built over against her, and that the dust of her walls should be scraped. Tyre was a great and flourishing city when the edict went forth against her: "I will make thee like the top of a roek, thou shalt be a place to spread nets upon, thou shalt be built no more." Tyre was twice besieged, the first time by Nebuchadnezzar. The Tyrians fearful that their city would be taken, cut a channel all round the outer wall, and brought the sea around it. Nebuchadnezzar was therefore obliged to build a mount over against it, higher than the walls of the city, but still he could not get near enough to make the battering rams play upon the walls; his soldiers, therefore, scraped the walls with horses' hoofs. The walls of Tyre were made of mud, just like part of those of Sebastopol. (People are just beginning to find out that *mud* walls are superior to *stone* for resisting cannonade.) Is this all fiction? Was it by mere chance that these prophecies were so literally and so remarkably fulfilled?

Come with me to Jerusalem. Jerusalem being surrounded with high hills, cannot be seen until you are close upon it. It is 40 miles distant from the sea, and as you leave the shore early in the morning, you generally reach the city a little before sunset. Your first idea of that crowning city is, where is the first,

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the second, the third wall?—where is the tower of Antonia?—where is Zion?—where is Mount Moriah? You search for even fallen ruins, but you can find none. The scene is one which really brings your heart down. I have often gazed with pleasure upon the ivy covered ruins of England. I love that dear little, fond, affectionate *ivy*. It seems to say to the ruin, "Never mind, I will be your friend throughout; though all forsake you, yet will I cling to you."

But in looking upon Jerusalem you can see no ruins, not even a single sprig of ivy to cheer you. It is a small town encumbered with hovels. As you gaze sadly upon it, the infidel says to you, "surely, sir, *this* is not Jerusalem?" But yes, it is Jerusalem, for there is Mount Olivet where our Saviour retired to pray, there is the brook Cedron, there is the pool of Siloam, there is Mount Zion, there is Mount Moriah. It *is* Jerusalem, but oh, how changed! When we see a rich man reduced to poverty, we feel sorry for him, and that is generally the feeling one has on viewing a decayed city. But that is *not* the feeling which you will have on seeing Jerusalem. The idea that fills your mind is, that Jehovah has passed over the country. An awful feeling creeps over you. When I first saw Jerusalem, I felt as if I stood before a dead body; in fact I cannot tell you *what* I felt, or *how* I felt. Even the Infidel experiences the same feeling. Is this Jerusalem where Christ lived and died, where he was mocked, scourged and crucified? Is this the birthplace of Christianity? You pause and think. You feel as if you were following some dear friend to the grave.

Let me now speak to you of the church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem. This church is built over Mount Calvary, where our Saviour was crucified, and over what is said to be his His Sepulchre. It was about the dome of this church that the late war commenced. It became dilapidated, and France and Russia quarrelled about which of them should repair it. It is still unrepaired. (The lecturer then proceeded to describe the relative position of the several places of interest within the church: the stone of unction, where the body of our Saviour was prepared for the tomb, the pillar of flagellation where He was scourged just before his crucifixion—the place where his garments were divided—the cave where the cross was found, &c.; but as it is impossible to make this description intelligible without a diagram, we are obliged to omit it. This is the place which thousands of pilgrims come yearly to visit. It is impossible to describe one's feeling on falling on your knees, (you do so involuntarily) on the stone of unction. You feel as if you were in

the immediate presence of the Great Saviour of Mankind. You do not stop to think whether the localities pointed out to you are *really* the places where the events described took place.

It was foretold of Jerusalem that she should be a city of heaps, and it is literally fulfilled. Immense heaps of rubbish meet you every where. The church of England people when laying the foundation of their church, had to dig through a heap of rubbish 50 feet in depth before they came to the rock. It is peculiarly a city of heaps.

Suppose you enter a large town, and go into one house and find nobody there, then into another, and another, and so on, finding all empty. You go to the markets, to the halls, to the churches, and find them quite deserted, nobody to be seen. Will you not be astonished? There is a town in Syria with its houses, theatres, columns, and gate-ways all there, but without a single inhabitant. That town is the wonderful Petra, the capital of Edom. The town is built at the foot of a hill, on a slope rising up from the valley. It was foretold of Edom that she should be made *bare*, and that no man should live in her. Can the fulfilment of this be all fiction? Can it be mere chance?

We come now to a point still more striking. It is quite a common saying among you to tell one another to go to Jericho. Well, you need not tell me *that*, as I have been there. (*Luagherter.*) The town no longer exists. Where Jericho once stood, the wild Bedouin encamps. It is an excellent site for a town for business, for commerce, for agriculture, and yet nobody lives there. You have read of the cluster of grapes which the spies which Joshua sent forth, brought from the brook of Eschcol. You talk of *your* grapes! Why we would not call them grapes at all in Syria; we would not give them even to pigs! Our grapes are as large as Walnuts, very juicy, and grow in great abundance. I remember my brother John and myself bringing home a bunch one day on our way from school, which was so large that we were obliged to carry it home on a stick between us. Thousands of pilgrims visit Jericho every year, and it would therefore be an excellent place for a hotel. If a large hotel were built, other houses and buildings would necessarily follow, and a town would soon rise up, but notwithstanding this, and all the natural advantages of the place, no hotel is built. Two American farmers went to Syria some years ago to settle. They went over the whole country, and visited Jericho, but finally settled, one of them at Etam, and the other at Jaffa. I asked them why they did not settle in Jericho. They said they did not know. I asked them if it were not a good place for

business, if they could not have made money there. Oh yes, they said, plenty of money could be made there,—excellent stand for business. I asked them again, why they did not settle there. Their answer was, "Sir, we cannot tell you why we did not settle there." But I can tell you friends. The Lord says "Cursed is the man that rebuilds Jericho," and no man *dares* to rebuild it.

You have heard of Sodom and Gomorrah. They were destroyed by fire, and the Dead Sea now occupies the spot where they stood. The Infidel says when you tell him this "do you think I am a fool, can fire become water? No, fire cannot become water, nor water fire." "Well, no matter," you say, "go into this sea and have a bathe, you need not be afraid, you cannot sink in it." Well, he goes in, comes out again, and begins to scratch himself. You say "what is the matter sir, why do you scratch yourself, water cannot become fire, water cannot burn." But he says "I am burning, I am burning." "Nonsense," you say, "who ever heard of water burning." But friends he is really burning. Stephens says that long after coming of the water, after bathing in the Dead Sea, he felt like a lamb roasting over a slow fire.

Let us now come to the people of Syria. They are still more interesting than the country itself. There ought to be three races of people in Syria,—the Canaanites, the Hebrews, and the Ishmaelites. Now, I am a native of Syria, but I cannot tell you to what race I belong. Our country has been overrun, over, and over, and over again. It has been re-re-re-conquered, and each successive band of invaders has settled down in the country, and inter-married with its inhabitants. Suppose an Englishman marries a French woman, and a boy is the result,—that boy marries a Swedish woman, and a boy is the result and so on through half-a-dozen different nations, and at last I am the result.—(*Laughter.*) Now of what race am I? I am sure I cannot tell you. I suppose you would say that I would be the cream of the whole lot, so I suppose the people of Syria are the cream of the whole world.—(*Laughter.*)

One of our most remarkable races is the Bedouins or Ishmaelites. They will rob you wherever they meet you, but still will indignantly repel the charge of being *robbers*. They consider that they are merely taking back the share in the property of Abraham, of which their father Ishmael, as they think, was unjustly deprived by his brother Isaac. Still with all his faults the Bedouin is an honorable man. If you put your hand on the pole of his tent he will do everything in his power to serve you.

If you have eaten bread and salt with him (their term for taking a meal with you) he will fight for you, and if need be, die for you.

We come now to the Jews. Their history is to us the most interesting of any. Syria was anciently the land of the Jews. But where is Israel now? What says the Bible of him, "His feet shall carry him far off, he shall sojourn in a strange land, he shall be called forsaken, he shall be a servant to his brethren." The Israelites used to be like Englishmen of the present day. The Englishman, when he is on the continent and has nothing particular to do amuses himself by strutting up and down half a dozen times a day, calling out, "I am an Englishman, I am an Englishman." So the ancient Israelite used to exclaim, "I am of Israel—I am of Israel." There are very few Jews now in Syria. The few that are there are old men, who have come from other countries to die there. You ask me where are they? I answer, their feet have carried them far off, they are sojourning in strange lands. Mark the word *sojourning*. You will meet a Jew in Austria and ask him about the political state of the country. He will tell you, sir, I am a stranger, I know nothing about it. You ask him where he was born. He will tell you in Austria. You ask the same question about his father, grandfather, great grandfather. They were all born in Austria, and yet he is a *stranger*. He is *sojourning* in a strange land. It is only in Christianized England that the Jew is beginning to feel himself not a stranger, and that is only a late occurrence.

This is a money loving age. Money will make the fool pass current in society. Gild the madman over with gold, and nobody will believe that he is mad. If a man has plenty of gold he does not want brains. In this age

Copper pence are above common sense.

But if a man be ever so wealthy, the moment you say he is a Jew, it is felt to be something against him. I remember once in a steamer in the Mediterranean, there was a gentleman, in whom, from his agreeable and gentlemanly manners, we all became very much interested. We went to the captain to find out who he was, and discovered he was a Jew. One repeated to the other with an expression of disgust on his face, "sir, he is a Jew," and elegant and gentlemanly though he was, we all kept aloof from him as much as possible. The Bedouin says he would rather be a hog than a Jew. The Mussulman says he would rather be a dog. I met a Bedouin driving an obstinate pig into Jerusalem. The Bedouin called out to him, cursed be thy father the son of a Jew, then, with another blow, cursed be thy

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mother the daughter of a Jew. Observe, it was the Jew whom he cursed all the time. It was foretold that Israel should be a servant to his brethren, and so he is, even as an usurer, what does he do but serve you. Provided you give him good security and good interest, he will give you the monish.—(Laughter.) He will serve you.

The Bible is indeed true. Your Bible is built on every rock in Syria.

One word in conclusion. That Christianity which rose from poverty and degradation, has spread over the whole world, and wherever it has gone, it has produced freedom, science, and refinement. The Anglo-Saxon is now at the top of the pyramid. They tell me it is the Anglo-Saxon *blood* which is the cause of this. I do not believe it. Bleed me and you will find that my blood is as good as yours. I can bring you as good Syrian blood as any Anglo-Saxon blood. You Anglo-Saxons do not comprehend the cause of your greatness. We Syrians do. When years ago I saw in my own country the great ships of England, her goods all over Syria, and heard that she had sway over 200 millions of people, I thought she must be a very extensive country, that she must spread from pole to pole. Well, when I went to London, and travelled from there all over England, Scotland and Ireland in five days, I said to myself, can it be possible that this small Island rules 200 millions of people.

I saw the tall chimnies of the manufactories of Paisley, Manchester, and Birmingham, where goods are manufactured for the whole world. Speak to the Bedouin of Birmingham, and he knows not what you mean, but the scimitar which he carries was made there. The Syrian never heard of Glasgow, but the girdle which he wears is from that city. You find England's soldiers at Gibraltar, the key of the Mediterranean. You meet her everywhere. She is, in fact, the policeman of the whole world. Whence has all this arisen? Three hundred years ago, England was a *third-rate* power. Even paltry Spain made her tremble at that time. You depended for your commerce upon Flemish *tubs* (I call them *tubs*, for they were not *ships*).—(Laughter.) You were not free then. Remember Smithfield. Tell me that your blood has achieved all your greatness for you! Where was your blood 300 years ago? Perhaps it was *thin* then, and has become a little *thicker* since!—(a laugh.) No, Sir, it was not your *blood*, it was the *Bible of God*, that has made England what she now is. You cannot trace her supremacy one day earlier than the Reformation. Look at her in the vortex of 1848, standing calmly with her arms folded awaiting

the storm. The waves passed over her, but she stood firm and unwavering. It was not her Anglo-Saxon blood which preserved her ; it was the Bible.—(*Applause.*) Do you remember Louis Philippe—Pomare—Tahiti. Ten years after Queen Pomare became a Protestant, Louis Philippe sent her a ship load of priests and crucifixes. She refused to receive them ; but he compelled her to take them, and to allow convents and nunneries to be built. Six years after he was hurled from his throne. Look at the triumphs of the Bible in the Society Islands. Thirty years ago the Inhabitants of those Islands were savages. Twenty years since they became Christians, and now they build their own churches and schools, and contribute towards sending the Gospel to the rest of the world. Mark also the spread of the Gospel in India, China, and Persia.

One word more. You must all die ! What will be your state after death ? Christianity is a *reality*. Oh ! if I could show you the terrors of hell ! But, what says the Word of God ? “ If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.” Go home, and reflect that your hearts will not beat forever—that there is an eternity beyond the grave ! When you come to die, your wealth will not be of any benefit to you ! Christianity cannot be a fiction. Your souls are bound to an eternity, either of bliss or of woe ! Promise me that you will go home, and think of this for one half hour. Think of heaven, think of the terrors of hell, think of the love of Christ ! I shall be amply rewarded for all my trouble, if you think seriously on these things for even one half hour. Your Christianity is true, powerful, and strong. Think of it ! And now, friends, I will bid you good night. (*Enthusiastic applause.*)

After a few remarks from the Chairman of the meeting (Dr. Avery), a collection was taken up, the object of which was then explained by the Lecturer in the following remarks :—“ The object of this collection is to aid in the erection of a church on Mount Hermon. Several missionaries were sent there, one after another, some years ago, but they were all driven away. At last a doctor went there, who was very successful in healing the sick. The people were very grateful to him, and asked what he would take for payment. In Syria we do not pay our doctors in *money* as you do, but in *honey*, or other produce. He said, he required no payment, but asked as a favor that they would

allow him to preach the gospel to them. They granted his request and he laboured among them as a Missionary. At last, in 1855, *eighteen* persons declared themselves Protestants. They worship in a small room. When the Gospel call came from China a few years ago, an elderly man with a grey beard rose up in their assembly, and said, "Sir, we must do something to send the Gospel there." The result was a collection of £6 7s. sterling, the first collection in the first native Protestant Church in Syria. The members of this Church are very poor. Their whole property is not worth £80 sterling. They are anxious to build a Church. The Church will cost £600. This amount has all been raised except 280 dollars. I hope Halifax will give that sum. Be it your privilege to join with us in putting a stone in the first native Protestant Church in Syria."

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## SECOND LECTURE:

Tuesday, 9th September, 1856.

Secret of Happiness.—Bible the best book on Syrian customs.—Bedouins of Syria and Indians of America, the same race.—Manners and customs of Bedouins—America known to the Inhabitants of Syria in Solomon's time, and colonized by them.—Townspeople of Syria, their manners and customs.—Mode of Salutation.—Marriage customs.—Marriage of Isaac and Rebekah.—Sects in Syria.—State of Christians in Syria.—Degraded condition of Syrian women.—Appeal on their behalf.

[As on the last evening, the Hall was filled to overflowing long before the hour for the lecture, and many were obliged to leave the building, being unable to find even comfortable standing room.]

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN—

I am happy to be once more among you. I am glad to see so many here, and sorry to learn that a number have been obliged to leave for want of room. I really feel flattered by your kind attention. Last night it was only *natural* that there should be a large audience. A Syrian from the Holy Land was to lecture in Halifax for the first time, and from the *novelty* of the thing, many would be induced to come. But it is highly gratifying to my feelings that after that novelty has ceased, so large an audience is again here. I hope that I may be able to tell you something which will repay you for your trouble in coming. I am no orator; I simply relate facts. I leave eloquence to other hands, and there are gentlemen on the platform who are much better skilled in the art than I am. I am anxious to make you love Syria in her associations—to love her as the temple of the Christian faith. Everything which shows the Christian religion to be true is important to us. It makes our faith rise from a worldly to a heavenly point of view. Then we can say, "Thy will be done."

Which is the happier, the Christian or the Infidel ? Where is the truest happiness ? We all long for happiness.—Yonder young man is working day and night. You ask him why he works so hard ? He tells you he is striving to make a fortune, so as to be able to retire from business, and be *happy*. He amasses a fortune, and still he is not happy. He says now he must get married, in order to become *happy*. He gets married, and still he is not satisfied. So he goes on continually striving after happiness, but never attaining it. I have traversed the civilized globe, and I have found that everywhere men seek after the shadow, but miss the substance. In order to be happy, we must live for others, not for ourselves. There is a pleasure in making others happy. I can prove this to you by every day occurrences. Take the smoker. He will not perhaps, give a beggar a penny to get a loaf of bread, but he will willingly pay sixpence for a cigar, to smoke *with* you. Take the drinker. He will spend 4s. or 5s. for a bottle of wine, to enjoy the pleasure of drinking it with a *companion*. No man can be happy, who lives for himself alone. God knew this principle in our nature, when he took the rib from Adam's side. Look at the miser. He goes about with a ragged coat, and a care-worn anxious look, piling money upon money. Is he happy ? With all his money he can only breakfast, dine, and go to bed, and so can I. He must have a great idea of happiness ! Even children cannot be happy living for themselves alone. Poor little Jane is sick. She is fond of flowers, but cannot go out to pick any herself. Little John makes a bouquet for her, and she is quite delighted with it. Is not little John happy now ? Take another illustration. A little boy gets a penny to buy candy. The candy after it is once eaten cannot be reproduced, besides it may spoil his teeth, and make him ill. But suppose he goes and puts his candy money in the Missionary box, then his candy will be reproduced over, and over again, and ten times sweeter. You say, what can a penny do ? One penny cannot do much, but a haap of pennies may be enough to pay the passage of a Missionary to a foreign land. After some years a Syrian comes forth, who, with many others, has been converted through the instrumentality of that Missionary, and who has been educated in a school established by him. He says to you, sir, I am your penny. If it had not been for your *individual* penny, there would not have been the *collected* pennies, and had it not been for them, the Missionary would not have gone to my country, and I should not have become a Christian. There then is the little boy's

candy re-produced ten times sweeter. The man must be devoid of all feeling who would not be made happy by seeing the good that his penny has thus done. But we are not done with the penny yet. After ten years more when the little boy has become a man of thirty, another Syrian comes forth, and explains as the former one did, that he is also the fruit of his penny. Again ten years later another is brought to your notice, and at last after the little boy has left this world, he finds his penny again beyond the grave. A band of Syrians approaches the Almighty Father. They say, "here is the man who sent money to Syria to teach us, to him we owe all our christianity." Then the little boy hears the heavenly greeting: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Last night I endeavored to prove the *reality* of Christianity, by describing the present condition of Syria, and its towns, and showing how remarkably the prophecies with reference to them have been fulfilled. To night I shall with the same view direct your attention to the manners and customs of its inhabitants.

The best book on Syria is the Bible. We people in the *East* are strange people, bashful people. We live much within doors, and few see much of us, except those of our own country. Very few travellers have written correctly of us, because they are not admitted into our private circles. We are very fond of *old* ways. Our customs are just the same now, as they were in Bible times 3000 years ago, and therefore the Bible is the *best* book on Syria. Some of our customs are amusing, laughable, and interesting. They are altogether different from yours. You take off your hat on entering a drawing room,—we take off our shoes. This is a custom that comes to us from olden times. Moses was told to take off his shoes on approaching the burning bush. Taking the *hat* off with us on entering a room would be considered the same as taking off one's *coat* with you.

The people of Syria may be divided into two great classes, the *Bedouins* and the *Towns-people*. The Bedouins are the Ishmaelites of olden times. They inhabit the wilds of Syria, and form a peculiar, and entirely distinct race. The Bedouin will rob you on the principle that you have robbed him before. But still the Bedouin is the soul of honor and chivalry. For a description of his character read *Antar* by Hamilton. If you reach the Bedouin's tent and put your hand upon the pole, you are safe,—your life is secure. The Bedouins are well made and exceedingly handsome, tall, erect, and noble looking, with an eagle eye that will look you straight down. Their food is simply milk and Indian c      The men are constantly away in the

desert in search of plunder. The women remain at home to take care of the tents. When I first came to America, some four or five years ago, I was prepared to adopt the idea that your Indians are the lost ten tribes. But when I visited Minnesota, and Iowa, and went among the Indians there, I felt that there was no fiction greater than the idea that they were Jews. I saw at once from their customs and manners that they were downright Bedouins. We know the habits of the Jew. He settles down to make money. Does the Indian do so? No; but like his brother Bedouin in Syria, he loves to rove. You cannot make him settle down in one spot. He has nothing in common with the Jew, except hands and feet, a head, and a pair of eyes.—(*Laughter.*) He lives in a wigwam, the Bedouin in a tent. The Indian calls the white man pale face, and considers him cowardly; so the Bedouin calls us townsmen a band of women, and regards us as low, mean, powerless people. Go into an Indian's wigwam, and the first thing he presents to you is the pipe of peace. The Bedouin does the same when you enter his tent. These two nations are also alike in the treatment of their children. When an Indian child is born, it is strapped tight to a straight board. The mother carries it in this way on her back; and at the same time a load on her head. The Bedouin mother does the same thing, and nowhere except among these two nations have I seen this custom. Their lives, habits and manners are similar. Look also at the Indian's features. He has the same eagle eye and commanding look which distinguish the Bedouin. I speak particularly of the Indian of the interior, some 2000 miles from the sea coast. I do not say that all the Indians are Ishmaelites. Some in South America, and some in the United States, I am convinced are not. You will ask me how they came over to America. Look at the last three verses of the ninth chapter of I. Kings, and you will find that Solomon had a navy of ships at Ezion-geber. You will see in the following chapter that his ships made a voyage once in three years. Again in speaking of Tyre, the Word of the Lord says, "Thy rowers have brought thee into *great waters*, the East wind hath broken thee in the midst of the seas." Observe that *waters* is in the plural. The Easterly wind would carry the ships direct to Gibraltar, and from thence across the Atlantic to America. Historians say that the Indians came by Behring's Straits. I do not believe this, because very few Indians remains are found near Behring's Straits. In fact, the majority of such remains are to be found further South than this place. As to the story of their coming over in a vessel which was driven far out of her

course by a storm, and wrecked, you may believe it, but I do not. It must have been *after-dinner* talk. As I remarked last evening, arts were practised in Syria in ancient times, which are now unknown to the world. Why may we not have had as perfect a knowledge of navigation as of the other arts, which we know formerly existed among us? The majestic columns of Petra, and the magnificent temples of Baalbec, remain to prove our knowledge of Architecture, and this country with its ancient inhabitants remains to prove our acquaintances with navigation. I am satisfied that both the Atlantic and Pacific were known in Bible times.

I will now speak of the Townspeople. I am a Townsman myself. Our national character has suffered much by mixing with foreigners. We have learned from them duplicity in trade. For instance a French or Austrian merchant sends a cargo of merchandize to Syria, amounting in value to £1000. His agent takes a false invoice, in which the goods are made out to be worth only £500, shews this to the custom house officer, and pays duties on the *latter* amount only. The Syrian merchant, in order to compete successfully with the foreigner, is obliged to practise the same deception. This duplicity is then, you see, a foreign addition to our character, and by no means a creditable one. Notwithstanding this defect, the Syrian is hospitable, generous, and agreeable. He takes as much pains to be polite, and to make himself pleasing to the old man of eighty, as to the young girl of eighteen.—He is as *agreeable* with the one as he is *loving* with the other.—(*Laughter.*) There are no hotels in Syria, except at Damascus or Jerusalem. When you enter a town you knock at the first door you come to, and then walk in. The servant comes to meet you, and then goes to inform his master of your arrival. The master comes and welcomes you, telling you that his house is yours. You then take off your shoes. In Syria we wear morocco slippers—not such shoes as I wear here, which are like yours. The servant then washes your feet, and wipes them in true Abrahamic style. A pipe is then handed to you. You are not asked whether you smoke or not, it is assumed you do, as smoking is the rule, and *not* smoking the exception. You may then make yourself perfectly at home in the house. You may stay one, two, or three days, as you please, but you are *expected* to stay *three* days. If you then receive a further invitation from the master of the house you may stay three days more and so on, three additional days for every time that the invitation is renewed. The rooms in Syrian houses are large and spacious, and there are separate saloons for *women*, as

they never sit in the same room with *men*. When you enter a room you find the people sitting all round the walls. It would never do for us to sit in the centre of the room as you do, for as our rooms are always full of smoke, if persons were sitting in the *middle* of the room, you would be apt to break the neck of a pipe, or perhaps the neck of some person.—(*Laughter.*) The seat of honor is directly opposite the door, and every new comer is pressed to take *that* place.

The host sits near the door. You are not introduced as **you** are here,—Mr. So and So, Mr. So and So,—but the host takes you in his arms and kisses **you**, as much as to say, I take you into my confidence; the person sitting next him does the same, and so on, until you reach the top of the room, where you sit down, take your pipe and smoke in company with the rest. I do not like this custom very much myself. When I returned home after my first visit to America, I was kissed all over my face until my cheeks were really sore.—(*Laughter.*)

If a Syrian meets a friend on the street, he places his right hand on his heart, then on his forehead, then kisses the tips of his fingers, and then bows, which means I sincerely love, respect and esteem you. *Young* Syria has abbreviated this process, and merely kisses his hand. After smoking, a servant brings you coffee, as strong as jalap, (*laughter.*) without sugar or milk, in a cup as small as one of your egg cups. Such coffee as *yours* would be nothing but dirty water to us. Then iced sherbet (which is just iced lemonade) is brought in on a silver salver. Having partaken of this, you talk, laugh, and so on, and after one more kiss away you go. Our manner of living and our houses are altogether different from yours. We are all such great smokers, that we would be smothered in your houses, as there is no convenient way of getting the smoke out of them. Our houses are built in the form of a quadrangle. There is a square room in each corner, with half rooms between them. The roofs of the houses are flat. We often spend our evenings, and sometimes the whole night there. You read in the Bible of praying on the *house-tops*. That is not at all an uncommon thing in Syria.

We recline on rich ottomans. We Eastern people are fond of lounging. I like it myself, I do not fancy being stuck up bolt upright on a chair like an Egyptian mummy. We cannot live upon roast beef as you do. The heat fairly

makes *roast beef* of ourselves. (*Laughter.*) They laugh at me at my hotel here for living on vegetables. We take one meal between 11 and 12 o'clock in the morning, something like your luncheon—a cold chicken with abundance of vegetables of all kinds. We dine at half-past seven on a warm dish made up of meat, minced with vegetables. There is one dish which I am very fond of. I will describe it to you, and if any of you will take the trouble to make it, I will be happy to dine with you.—(*A laugh.*) Take a vegetable marrow, scrape out the inside until it is quite thin, fill it with rice, and mutton cut into small pieces, and well seasoned with herbs, pepper, and salt, then lay on the top a cauliflower leaf or something of the kind, and let it boil in a saucepan for 2 hours. We never eat meat by itself, but always mix a large quantity of vegetables with it. On this diet we attain to great age. Old men of 110, 120, and even 130 years, are not at all uncommon in Syria.

Our marriage customs are the most amusing and interesting of all. We are still the people of 3000 years ago—still the same as in Bible times. Look at Isaac's marriage. Abraham said to his servant, go and take a wife for my son, I depend upon your taste in the matter. Persons are married in a similar way now in Syria. Marriage in Syria is the great epoch in a young man's life. If a boy wants a pair of shoes, his father tells him, wait my son until you get married, and so with almost every thing else that he asks for, and thus the young man is very anxious to get married, as he expects then to have all his wants satisfied. You say how is he to get married, when he never sees a female? The young people have nothing to do with bringing it about. The father or mother manages the affair. Young men are married at the age of fifteen, or sixteen, and girls at thirteen. My mother was married when she was eleven, and I was born before she was fourteen. At eighteen she was a widow with four small children. The climate allows these early marriages. Marriages are brought about in this way. The mother sees a young girl who pleases her, and she says to her husband, "husband, I think so and so, would make a nice wife for our John." "Well," says the husband, "do you think she will make him happy?" "Happy, oh, she will do well enough to hand him his pipe." "Very well then," says he, "you go and see her mother, and

I will see her "father." He accordingly calls on the father, and after a good deal of preliminary conversation, tells the father that he has a very fine daughter, whom he would like to have the honor of getting for his son. If the proposal be agreeable, the father replies, "Sir, the honor is on *my* head, I shall be proud of an alliance with your house." And now the young people are just as much married, as if the ceremony had actually been performed, although they know nothing about it. They are now betrothed. Some time after the clergyman comes to the house of the father of the young man. The father tells the son to bring a pipe for the clergyman. This is nothing uncommon, as it is always done when a visitor enters the house. But when the clergyman puts his hand on the young man's head, and blesses him, he then suspects what is going on. He knows now that he is betrothed, but whether his future bride is black or white, short or tall, whether she has false teeth or no teeth, (*laughter*) he cannot tell, he only knows that he is going to be married, as besides having received the blessing his father has given the clergyman the diamond, bracelet, and necklace for his future bride. The clergyman next goes to the house of the future bride. Her father says to her, "Jane, bring a pipe." She does so, and the clergyman on taking it, blesses her. Still this does not excite her suspicion, as it is very common for the clergyman to bless the girls; but when he puts the bracelet on her arm, the diamond on her forehead, and the necklace on her neck, she then knows that she is betrothed, but as to whether her future husband has woolly hair or straight hair, arms or no arms, a nose or no nose, she is utterly ignorant. (*Laughter.*) You will remember that when Abraham's servant selected Rebekah as a wife for Isaac, he gave her jewels. The poor bridegroom has never yet seen his wife, and cannot for some time yet. The period of betrothal varies from three to twelve months, but three months is the usual period. Next comes the marriage. This occupies four days,—from Thursday until Monday. If the Syrians saw your marriages here which are completed in five minutes, they would be astonished. They would say, "well, these people do every thing by steam, they even get married by steam." (*Laughter.*) Ten years ago a marriage used to occupy fourteen days, but young Syria has shortened the period. Any one, knowing that a marriage is about to be celebrated, may enter the house of the father of the bridegroom. He goes in and finds the house full of people eating and drinking. No invitation or preparation is required, except that you must have your best clothes on—you must have

the wedding garment. You find some fifteen or twenty men with long grey beards, carrying round trays of sweet meats. You refuse to take anything, as you say that you have already eaten enough, but you are pressed to eat, and must eat, as they tell you, the more you eat and drink, the more you show your love to the bridal pair. So the guests continue eating from Thursday afternoon until Sunday evening. The bridegroom's father, as soon as it becomes dark, says, "now friends, we must go to church." Marriages are always celebrated at night. A taper is then given to certain of the guests, as an invitation to witness the marriage ceremony, and the others quietly take their leave. Remember the parable of the wise and foolish virgins. The bridegroom and his party then leave through the archway. They arrive at the church. The bridegroom does not even yet see the bride, for she is veiled from head to foot. You will remember that Rebekah veiled herself when she met Isaac. Even *after* the marriage ceremonial the bridegroom does not immediately see his wife. The bride and bridegroom are then paraded through every street in town, the bride's party going one way and the bridegroom's another, until they arrive at the house of the bridegroom's father. A little before midnight the cry is heard, the "bridegroom cometh," and exactly at that hour the door is shut. Those who are out then must remain out, and those who are within, remain in. (The Lecturer here gave a humorous description of a marriage at Tripoli, in which he himself took part as one of the groomsmen. He graphically described the anxiety of the bridegroom to see his wife, his nervousness and trepidation on being told by the mischievous young men among his party, that the bride was old, ugly, &c. However, the bride turned out to be a very pretty girl.)

The Syrians are all nominal Christians and Mahometans. They are very indolent and ignorant. You will scarcely find five among a hundred who can read. Even within my own remembrance, when a letter came to Beyrouth, it was necessary to go over the whole town to find a person to read it. The girls in Syria, (except in Beyrouth, the town I come from) are considered beneath education. If I were a married man in Syria, and a son was born to me, my friends would run to me and say, "unto you a son is born," and I should be expected to give the bearer of the joyful tidings, my purse, or some valuable present. After that I should always be called by the name of my son. If my son's name were Gregory, I should be styled Father Gregory. If you were to write a letter to me, you would

address me thus : "My dear Father Gregory." So in conversation also, I should always be called "Father Gregory." But if it be a girl that is born, no one will come to tell of it. Bad news comes soon enough. All the windows in the house will be closed, and you would suppose that a funeral had taken place. My friends will by and bye, come to condole with me and say *ain shallah*, (it may please God) to give you a son next time, and the daughter can sweep your house, and cook your dinner, and thus be of some use to you. As to her being educated, such a thing is never thought of. The Mussulman never expects that she will go to Heaven. Indeed he does not want her to go there, as he looks forward to meeting there the beautiful Houris, whom he thinks earthly companions would defile. At her father's she has been the slave of the whole household, and now she is married to a man she never saw, she must be a slave to *him*. The moment he walks in, she must bring him his pipe, if he weeps, she must weep, if he laughs, she must laugh, she must be all things to him. Her bosom must never beat with pleasure, she must be all submission to her lord and husband, and never presume to sit in his presence.—Ladies ! how would you like this to be your condition ? If you were kept in this state, would you not be anxious that some one would plead for you ! If she is beaten nobody knows it. Nay, he may even kill her. One individual, as it was afterwards discovered, killed seven wives in one night. A writer on Syria, speaks of having found the body of a female under the window in the street, stabbed in two places. The body was put into a sack and thrown into the water, and no inquiry made about it. Unhappily, beating, flogging, and killing, are not the worst. If your condition is different, ladies, it is not because you are Anglo-Saxons, but because you have the Bible. If you think that it is education makes all the difference, look at the loose girl of France or Austria. In Syria the father takes his child with him to the store, and takes care of him. Here, his mother takes care of him all day. It is only in Bible lands that woman is a *wife* and *mother*. In Turkey and Syria she is only a slave.

I know not how to beg. You may know this, as I have not been near any of you to day. I want you, however, to feel for Syria. To say that you are *sorry* for her only, will not do. *That* is just like *mustard* on *beef*—a mere accompaniment to something more substantial. If you really feel for Syria, you will be willing to give something to aid her. Why must missionaries always derive their support from England and America ? Is Halifax for ever to remain free from such

such claims? This is the first time that a Syrian laborer in the Missionary cause, has ever visited you, and let it be said that your reply to this appeal was, "We *will* help."

I have told you nothing strange. I have told you simply the fact that Tyre is no longer, that Baalbek is in ruins, that Jerusalem is in heaps. But the same God who foretold the destruction of those cities, has also said of Syria "I will redeem her again, I will make her the glory of the whole earth." That prophecy is now being fulfilled. Look at our rising Beyrouth. I have told you what she was 20 years ago. Now, we have schools, churches, missionaries, and our people are educated and refined. Be it your privilege to join in this missionary work. Show that you can live for others, and that the land where Christ died for your sake is not without your sympathy. Let it be said that Halifax, when this appeal was made to her, came forward sympathizingly and generously. I can say no more. I know not how to say more.

I thank you for your marked attention. Oh! how delighted I should be if my mother were here to-night. How it would delight her heart, far away in Syria to know that an audience had listened with such attention to *her* son, for an hour and a half. Once more I thank you, and now, may the Lord bless you and poor Syria.—(*Enthusiastic applause.*)

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## THIRD LECTURE:

Wednesday, 10th September, 1856.

The Late War—Its connection with Syria and the Holy Land—Preserving the Integrity of the Ottoman Empire—The immediate cause of the War—Dome of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre—Different Christian Sects in Syria—Maronites—Intrigues of France and Russia—The Late Treaty—Its effect—Education in Syria—First Missionaries there and their converts—Their Sufferings—Protestant School at Beyrouth, opened by William Thomson, of Ohio—Its beneficial effects—Present and former state of Beyrouth.

[Although an admission fee of 7 1-2d. was taken this evening, at the suggestion of the Rev. P. G. McGrigor the evening previous the room was still crowded. This small fee was charged in order to secure comfort to the speaker and audience, by the Hall's not being uncomfortably filled, and that some noisy boys who had obtruded themselves at the second Lecture might be excluded. The Lecturer was opposed to it, as he said that he wished *every one* to, know about Syria, and did not in any sense of the word want to *beg*. He finally consented however.]

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN—

I rise to address you for the *last* time. There is something sad in the words "*the last time.*" Parting is to me always sad. Even on leaving a hotel for the last time, I feel sad. You may imagine then how deeply pained I must feel at parting with you, after the peculiar kindnesses which I have received, the manner in which you have opened your hearts and your homes to me, and the attentive hearing you have given me. A number of gentlemen who kindly called and left their cards, I have not been able to see. I hope they will take the intention

for the deed. I cordially thank those gentlemen who have so kindly given me their time, and invited me to their homes. My home is in Syria 7000 miles away, and I cannot hope ever to visit you again, nor can I expect that you will leave your duties to come to see me. We shall see each other no more until we meet at the great tribunal. Once more I thank you for your hospitality and kindness to me, and now friends to our lecture. (*Enthusiastic and continued applause.*)

I thank you for the applause, but please leave it until the close of the lecture.

Our subject is one of deep interest to you Anglo-Saxons, for you have spent your money on it,—and what is infinitely more valuable than money,—your *blood*. I am about to show you how Syria and the Holy Land are connected with the War, and how the War took place. I shall also explain to you the late Treaty, and the results which have just begun, and which must inevitably follow from it. Syria must always be a place of vital interest to England and the Anglo-Saxon race. Imagine that you have a map of Europe before you. There away up to the north is Russia, and below her, to the southward, Austria and Prussia. Then to the east of the latter two countries, and to the southward of the former you find Syria, Africa, and Egypt. France through her first Napoleon once said, "Give me Syria and I will conquer Constantinople, and break down the Turkish empire." Russia says the same, and they are right, too; for Syria is the key to the possession of Turkey. Russia says, "Give me Turkey, and I can soon conquer Austria and Prussia." If she gets Syria she will soon overrun Austria and Prussia, and ten years hence there may be France alone on the continent to bear the brunt of the whole Russian empire. France, Russia, Austria, and Prussia, are all clamoring for the possession of Syria, but England steps in and says, "Gentlemen, none of you can have it; if any one must have Syria, I must have it myself." (*Applause.*) But England says, "If I take it, I will be vulnerable at that point: Russia will be constantly attacking me there, and it would cost me another national debt to fortify it." England, therefore, determines to insure its possession to Turkey, and to *defend* her in the possession of it; and this is what is called *preserving the integrity of the Ottoman Empire*.

Much has been said about danger to India, if Russia should become possessed of Turkey. But those who know the Balkan and Himalaya mountains, know that there need be no fear about India being conquered by any army coming over them. How-

ever, if Syria belonged to France or Russia, the highway of England to India would be blocked up, and it would cost her a million, perhaps a thousand millions, to keep up her intercourse with that country.

Now, let us step back 3000 years ago. Syria was even then an interesting country. The Almighty having the whole earth before him, chose Syria *par excellence*, as a good and perfect gift for Abraham, and also as the dwelling place of His own Son while in the flesh.

Alexander the Great knew the importance of Syria. He spent several months at the siege of Tyre, and at the end of that time a bridge, which he had constructed to lead into the town, was destroyed. He was dismayed, appalled, and would have retired from the field, but that he felt it was absolutely necessary for him to possess the place—Tyre being the mistress of the Mediterranean.

Your councillors, your statesmen, know full well the value of Syria. Let her be menaced, and you will have to go and fight again. Your blood was shed unsparingly at Sebastopol, and it would then have to flow as freely again.

God has done for England what she never could have done for herself. This war has strengthened her interests, and insured her safety in the Mediterranean, in Turkey, Syria, and Egypt. You ask me how? I will show you. The war commenced about the dome of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem. This dome became dilapidated; the Greek Church said, "I must repair it." The Romish Church claimed the same privilege. Lavalette asked and obtained from the Sultan a *firman* to enable the Romish Church to build it. The Greek Church found themselves nonplussed. Russia then said to Turkey, "You must recall that firman." Turkey was about to do so, when Lavalette said, "If you do, I will bring a fleet to Constantinople." Turkey then hesitated. Russia seeing this, said, "If threatening be the order of the day, I can threaten too,"—and ordered her armies into the Principalities. This was considered as a *casus belli* by Turkey, who accordingly declared war some time after against Russia.

You will ask me how did the Greek and Romish Churches get to Syria, and what have they to do there? I will explain to you. There are various sects of Christians in Syria. There are the Greek Orthodox, the Greek Maronites, and the Roman Catholics.

The Maronites acknowledge the Pope as the head of the Church. In the 11th century the Crusaders went forth. The

Crusaders hated the Mussulmen, and so did the Maronites, who accordingly made common cause with the Crusaders, and consented to acknowledge the Pope as the head of the Church, although they have no other views in common with the Catholics. There was a popular preacher in Damascus called Carolus—a Greek bishop. His people wished to make him Patriarch of Antioch, but the Greek Ecclesiastics refused to do so, as he held some doctrines which were contrary to those of the Greek Church. For instance, he believed that the Holy Spirit proceeded from the Father and the Son. The Greek Church believes that the Holy Ghost proceeded from the Father alone. In this strait the Catholics offered to make him Patriarch if he would acknowledge the Pope as Head of the Church. He consented to do so, and thus became Patriarch of Antioch. Thus sprang up the sect of the Maronites.

Strenuous efforts have been made by the Roman Catholics to extend the power of the Romish Church in Syria. They have built cathedrals, convents, nunneries, and so forth. A poor Maronite finds a magnificent cathedral going up by his door. He says, "Dear me what a fine church, what church is that?" "Oh," says the Romanist, "that is your church." "Oh, no," he replies, "that cannot be the case, for I am a poor Maronite." "But you acknowledge the Pope as the Head of the Church." "Yes," "Well, then, that Church is for you."

The Greek Church were acting in the same way.

The movements of these Churches were closely watched by the Potentates who supported them, and they were both making rapid advances, until this war broke out and stopped the progress of both of them.

We are all Turkish subjects in Syria. France is the protector of the Romish Church, and Russia of the Greek Church. I will explain to you how they became such. Even as late as five years ago, the greater part of the inhabitants of Beyrouth were in a very degraded condition. A Christian's word would not be taken in a Court of Justice, and he had to suffer all kinds of insults. Suppose I were a Roman Catholic or a Greek, and a Mussulman strikes me on the cheek. I go and tell the Consul—the French or the Russian, according to the Church to which I belong. The Consul immediately puts on his cocked hat, and goes to the Pasha, and says, "Sir, this conduct must not be allowed." "Certainly not," says the Pasha, "the man must be punished," and accordingly he is punished. The Pasha does this *not* because he cares about the Christian, but because he is afraid of greater demands being made by the nation to

which the Consul belongs. From frequent occurrences of this kind, it became an understood thing, that the Romish Church was under the protection of France, and the Greek Church under the protection of Russia. These powers, in order to serve their own ends, have made political capital out of our creeds. They were endeavoring to effect by stratagem, what they could not effect by force. France says, "If I can make all the people of Syria *Catholics*, I shall have their sympathy." Russia thinks she will attain the same end by making them all members of the *Greek Church*. France has spent enormous sums of money for this object. The Roman Catholic Cathedral in Jerusalem cost £170,000, one in Beyrouth £120,000, one in Damascus £80,000, and the one in Aleppo £100,000. Several others have been built at a large cost in other towns in Syria. What a contrast this is to the liberality of Protestants! \* It has cost your unworthy speaker, three years labour to raise £600.

You ask me who has gained by this war? I say nothing has gained by it but the Bible. All the great Powers who engaged in it, have been disappointed. They have been *checkmated* in every project and in every idea by the Great Super-intending Power. God has said to France and Russia, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further!"

Turkey never supposed that the war was going to annihilate her, but it *has* done so virtually by the destruction of her religion. She may now say of her Islamism, "Ichabod, the glory is departed."

Then again as to France. A cardinal from Rome used to visit Syria every few years in state, and parade through the streets at the head of a large procession, almost equal in magnificence to a regal retinue, in order to impress the Syrians with an idea of the power and grandeur of Rome. France supposed that she would be a gainer by the War, but she has been disappointed. The Bible is now allowed to circulate freely among all classes in Syria, and I need not tell you friends, that where the Bible goes, it will make its way. (*Applause.*) All the different nations entered upon the War with different motives, but God overruled it all, to his own glory.

So again with Russia. Russia thought that the War would destroy the Romish Church, but her own power has been broken. The Bible now goes to the Greek, as well as to the Mussulman.

The promises are now being fulfilled of the deliverance of Syria. Baalbek remains to attest her former grandeur. Tyre is no longer, and Jerusalem is in heaps. The Dead Sea flows

over Sodom and Gomorrah. But the same mouth which uttered the prophecy of Tyre, that she should be a rock for fishermen to spread their nets on, has also said of her, and of all Syria, "I will redeem her again, I will make her a praise unto all nations." Do you not see that there is a *guiding hand* in Syria? If a Syrian is injured the whole world is in commotion about him. You take as much interest in him as though he were *your own child*. You do not take such an interest in other countries. Let China, Prussia, or France be attacked, and you are quite indifferent as to the result. Although this War came upon us unexpectedly, it did not come too soon. Our country required it. Twenty years ago it would have done little or no good. The state of ignorance which then prevailed, even in Beyrouth, I have already described to you. Girls were looked upon as far inferior to men, three girls being considered equivalent to one boy. All the education you could then find in Syria, was a school of twelve boys—the scions of the aristocracy sitting round a priest in the vestry of the Church. They were taught to read the Psalms of David; there was no Spelling Book in Syria. When a boy could read the Psalter, he was considered educated. Arithmetic was not taught. The educated boy could not tell what twice two made without counting it up on his fingers. The people, then, laughed at the idea of the world being round, or that the sun stood still. If I had told them that this handkerchief was silk, and the Church said it was cotton, they would believe that it was cotton. Even on looking at it they would not think otherwise. If I were to say, feel it, they would reply, "we do not want to feel it; the Church has said it is cotton, and we say it is cotton—*cotton* it must be, and so there is an end of all argument about it."

Such was the state of Syria a few years ago, but a great change has been wrought there. God first began with the Christians. In 1818 the *first* Missionaries (who were Americans) went to Syria; English Missionaries went subsequently. As soon as it was known that these Missionaries had landed, a cry went through all the churches that they were heretics. If a Syrian saw one of them walking down the street, he would run as if the plague were after him. If a Missionary even asked his way out of a street, they would put their hands to their ears, and run away as if for their lives, crying *heretic, heretic*. What human power could effect anything under such circumstances as these? The work which has progressed there within the last twenty years is peculiarly the Almighty's own work. The word "*heretic*" in Syria means a man expelled from the

Church, and accursed by God and man. The hottest part of hell is said to be reserved for the heretic. It is thought worse to be a heretic, than to be a thief, or even a murderer. A thief or a murderer can be absolved, but a heretic never can. No wonder the natives were shy of the Missionaries, when such denunciations were uttered against them! The American Missionaries labored prayerfully and faithfully from 1818 to 1836, without making a single convert among the natives. Four persons joined their Church, but they were all foreigners—three being American Bishops, and one a Maronite from Mount Lebanon. I am the son of one of those Bishops, and a Presbyterian—a pretty staunch one too. (*Laughter and applause.*) Friends, do not misunderstand me. I do not believe that the Presbyterian Church, is the *only* Church—far from it. I look upon *all* Evangelical Churches as the Church of God. These Churches are just like the different regiments in your army—some are Highlanders, others Hussars, and so on. They have a different dress, but they all fight for the one Queen. Shew me the man who loves God, and I will hail him as a brother. You will say, "how does it happen that you, the son of an Armenian Bishop, are a Presbyterian?" My father was the *first* who joined the American Missionaries. They were Presbyterians, and I was accordingly brought up to that form of religion. My father was from the convent of St. James' in Jerusalem, and was married after his conversion. You see then, how I could be the son of an Armenian Bishop, and yet a Presbyterian.

You call yourselves Christians, but what does the profession of your faith cost? If I were to tell you of the persecutions which these Christians,—both the converts and the Missionaries—endured, from 1818 or 1820 to 1836, it would seem like boasting. You have only to look at your Missionary Records to learn what they suffered.

In 1835 the American Missionaries with one single exception became discouraged and left Beyrouth, and went to Smyrna and other places. One of them, however, William Thompson of Ohio, (and blessed be his name,) was determined to remain. He said that he had come to Beyrouth to labor as a Missionary, and that nothing should drive him away from there but death. He opened a small school after the American fashion; my brother and myself, and the other sons of the Armenian bishops comprised the school, making in all six pupils. Mr. Thompson was at first unwilling to take me, as I was too young he said, being only six years of age. The pupils were not to be under seven. My mother however entreated him so earnestly, telling

him that I was clever, that he at last consented to take me for two months to see if I would answer. I suppose I *did* answer for I remained after that period. (*Laughter.*) The people of Syria were at that time in a half civilized state, not because they wanted means but because they knew no better. The children were dirty. The people had no idea of European manners. Men and women did not associate together. Pray excuse me for saying *men* and *women*, the *Bible* calls them so. When I speak of my own country people I shall speak of them as *men* and *women*. When I speak of you, I shall call you *ladies* and *gentlemen*. (*Laughter.*) The Missionary gave each of us a room nicely furnished, a beautiful bedstead, and bed with nice white sheets, carpet, table, chair, &c. When my key was given to me and I was told that there was *my* room, I felt that I was a *man*. (*Laughter.*) (The Lecturer here described his first books, and the interest which he felt in them and their pictures.) Mr. Thompson told us that for the first two months we might speak as much Arabic as we pleased, but after that, for every Arabic word that we spoke we should lose a dinner. During the first few months of the new system I lost more than half my dinners. The greatest fun was to see the whole six boys with their arms outstretched standing on a bench (for this was part of the punishment for speaking Arabic) with a fine warm dinner smoking before them, which they were obliged to stand looking at for half an hour and then return to the school dinnerless. (*A laugh.*) However at the end of a year, we could speak English pretty well. People have asked me how it is, that I speak English so well. English was the first tongue in which I learned to read, write, and express my ideas. I think, feel, act, and even dream in English. In fact I am all English except my dress. At the end of the year Mr. Thompson gave us two weeks' vacation. We were then clean and neat in our persons, had good clothes, &c. In fact we were *nice* boys compared to what we were when we first went to the school. My first impulse was to brush my hair, put on my best dress, and go to town. I accordingly did so. The town boys crowded round me. I said to them, "keep away, keep away, you are so dirty." The boys stared at me, and even their fathers, and grandfathers gazed on me with astonishment. I pulled my books out and showed them the pictures. Boys are the same all over the world. They were delighted with the pictures. I read the explanation of the pictures to them in English, and in Syrian. "WHAT!" they said, "a Syrian boy read English, and translate it into Syrian—a Syrian boy with fine long hair,

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and nicely brushed. Impossible! pray who are you?" "Why," said I, "don't you remember Greg Wortabet;—there's Peter,—there's Tom,—and there's John. I know *you* all, and have you forgotten me." "But," they said, "who brushed your hair so nice, and made you so clean and nice looking?" Then I told them about the school. They began to caper around me and my pictures, crying out, "we'll go to school too, we'll go to school too!" Their fathers interposed and said that they must not go to school to that *heretic* man. But the boys could not be restrained, and the consequence was that 26 boys were added to the school in a single year. In 1842 when the school broke up for want of funds, there were 74 children in attendance. From that time Beyrouth has become mid-day compared with what she formerly was. The Syrian boys there now are clean and gentlemanly looking. Twenty years ago you could not find one in twenty who could read. Now you cannot show me a Christian boy in Beyrouth who cannot both read and write, and also speak two or three languages. My brother John in Mount Hermon never left Syria, and he speaks some eight or nine languages, and as good English as any one in this room.

Our girls have been taught, and have proved themselves capable of education. We have no great Niagara as you have,—no majestic rivers, or wild scenery,—but our girls have as warm feelings, and as kind and affectionate hearts as any ladies here or any where else. Our girls are also capable of refinement. Twenty years ago the young men never cared when they saw a young woman, whether their collars were up or down, or how they looked. Now when we go courting we must put on our kid gloves, straighten up our collars, &c., and make ourselves look quite smart. (*Laughter.*) Now *seven* men are not equal to *one* woman in Syria. When the Bible went to Syria, our girls were at once elevated in social position. We are proud to see them no longer slaves. In the hour of sorrow we love to feel their soft and gentle hand on our burning brow. We also love their companionship in our *joyous* hours. Yes! yes! we will have them slaves no longer, and I pray to God that the time may come when in the *whole* of Syria, our women will be exalted to the proper dignity of their sex. Our girls are amiable, lovely and affectionate, and believe me, Nova Scotian ladies, beautiful as you are, and I pay you the compliment, our Syrian girls are not behind *you* in this respect.

Then look at the energy of our Merchants now. Formerly a man worth £90 sterling, was considered a millionaire. Now

a man worth tens of thousands is not considered extraordinarily wealthy. All this has been done within the last 20 years. Look at our luxuries, our drawing rooms, our carpets, furniture, &c.

If his Holiness were to tell us now, that a sour thing was sweet, we would say, "wait your Eminence, we will taste it ourselves." As a proof of what the Bible has done, I would only ask you to look at Old and New Beyrouth. Old Beyrouth is like the old town of Edinburgh—black and dingy. The new town is beautiful—pleasantly situated and embowered amidst mulberry trees.

The Christians are now rising up. Do you suppose I would allow a Turk to strike me on the cheek? No, by no means. We were on the point of a civil war, when this War broke out. Christianity came over our country, like a mighty Niagara, rolling along, and bringing with it wealth, refinement, taste, and civilization. The Mussulman, however was a drag to us. We were sighing for a change when God brought about this War. Mahometanism had ever been a great barrier to the advancement of our country, and to the progress of Christianity. This War came and broke it down. The late treaty allows the Bible to go to every man in Syria. The Mussulman can now go to school with the Christian. We can now teach the Mussulmen, and they will consequently advance as well as ourselves. The War was necessary for Syria and for Europe. (The Lecturer here related an incident which took place in Beyrouth, so late as April 1855, in which he himself was an actor, showing the insults to which the Christians were exposed, and the quarrels which took place between them and the Mussulmen, which would have probably led ere long to civil war.) The Mussulmen are now angry about the late treaty, but that feeling will wear away in time; and 20 years hence Turkey, I hope and believe, will be a Christian Country. We don't wish to drive the Mussulmen away, but to make them part and parcel of ourselves. O, happy day! O, happy moment! when the banner of the Cross shall wave over Jerusalem—the grave of my Great Redeemer. If I could only see *that*, I could die happy. I believe that it *will* happen, for the Lord has said:—"I will redeem her, I will make her a praise to all nations." Who ever supposed when this War commenced, that it would lead to the overturning of the Great Eastern Empire? Who ever thought that by Turkey's rising up against Russia's oppression that Christianity would be forwarded in the East? Nobody would have believed it, but it *has* come to pass, and you, though far from Syria, may yet come to look upon her

as the glory of the world. I have devoted the energies of my life,—my youth and strength for the last eight years,—to excite an interest in her. I felt very bad when it was proposed that you should pay for your admission here to night. It is true you have not been asked to pay much, but I want *all* to come and hear about Syria. I want every heart to say, “*I love Syria.*” I want you to love Syria for Christ’s sake. Contemplate your Saviour in the garden of Gethsemane! Think of the Crown of Thorns on His brow! Think of him dying—gasping for breath! Think of Him as he was borne along to the stone of unction, of His love, of His passion, of His death and burial! Think of them until you feel with me the same enthusiasm which animated the Crusaders when the whole of Europe was armed, and Kings left their Crowns behind them!

I want you to love Syria in a spiritual sense. We do not want crusading armies now, but send us the Word of Truth. You should do this in order to save yourselves further work. If you do *not* you will have to fight again. You will have to go to Syria, to *fight* and to *die* there. What would the cost of a Bible be to you,—you who spend so much upon your luxuries? Your wealth belongs to God. If you live it is only by his sufferance. When you see a drunkard, a cripple, a blind man or a beggar, think that but for the grace of God, you might have been in the same state. Perhaps you will say my genius, my strength has saved me from the drunkard’s, or the beggar’s fate. ‘No, Sir, it is God! I want you to give with a loving heart. (Do not be alarmed, there is no collection to be taken to-night.) I speak to you to-night of the claims of Christianity, because you may yet have to work for the whole world. Your motto should be *Excelsior*. You are in earnest in making money. The apostle says, “*I will shew thee my faith by my works.*” See the sarcasm with which he speaks of faith without works. You say to the hungry man, go and be fed, but you do not feed him, or to the naked man go and be clothed, but you do not clothe him. What good have you done him? You have only made things worse. If your Christianity be true, and you forget your duty, the time will come when your talent will be required of you, and you will then fare worse than the poor man who buried his. You will say, “*Oh, Father Abraham, if I had thought of this before!*” To be a Christian costs you little, to be a sinner a great deal. Choose my friends the safest and best way. Then you will have a smiling Father, to say, “*Well done thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.*”—(*Applause.*)

The Lecture being concluded, the Chairman, (Rev. P. G. McGregor,) announced that the Lecturer would be happy to reply to any questions respecting Syria, which any of the audience might be disposed to ask. No questions, however, were asked. The Lecturer then rose and said, "I thank you once more for your kindness and attention. Thanks to my different Chairmen. May the Lord bless you all. If you ever come my way, I shall be glad to return your kindness. I will think of you, when far away. Syria will think of you too. I shall ever consider as among the *happiest* moments of my life, the hours passed in this Hall addressing such numerous, respectable, and intelligent audiences.

I shall feel proud to get up an audience for you in Syria, if any of you will honor us with a visit. I feel sorry to leave Halifax. It is not likely that we shall ever meet again until we stand at the Judgment seat, before the Great Judge of all—*now* a God of mercy, *then* a God of Justice. May you live long, happy and useful lives; may your last hours be calm and peaceful, and may you be received at last into the Kingdom of your God and Saviour!"

A vote of thanks was then passed by acclamation, the Doxology was sung, and the meeting pronounced concluded. The audience however seemed unwilling to leave. Numbers of ladies and gentlemen pressed forward to the platform to take a personal farewell of the Lecturer, who received their congratulations in a graceful and kindly manner.

Thus ended a series of Lectures which have probably excited a deeper interest in Halifax, than any which have been delivered in the city for years. Notwithstanding the injunction laid upon them by the Lecturer, the audiences carried away by his vivid and graphic descriptions, interrupted him with bursts of applause. The other part of the suggestion "a good round at the end" was not forgotten.

ERRATA.—7th page, 12th line, for "had" read "has"; 17th line, after "present" insert "day"; 9th page, 41st line, after "it" insert a parenthesis; 20th page, 41st line, for "Indians" read "Indian"; 26th page, 26th line, for "the" read "his"; 36th line, for "Syra" read "Syria."

